

SENATE BILL 2895
By Woodson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
Chapter 4, Part 9, relative to eligibility for
Tennessee HOPE scholarships.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, is amended by
adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

§49-4-9__.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this part to the contrary, a student who is a Tennessee citizen, and a dependent child of a full-time religious worker, shall be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship as an entering freshman, if such student meets all eligibility requirements for such scholarship, except that, while the parent is serving in another nation as a religious worker, the student does not reside in Tennessee immediately preceding the date of application for financial assistance and the student does not meet the requirements of § 49-4-905(b)(2). To be eligible under this section, such student shall:

(1) Graduate from a high school in the foreign nation where the student's parent is a religious worker that is accredited by a regional accrediting association as defined by §49-4-902(24) and meet the academic eligibility requirements of §49-4-907(3); or

(2) Complete high school in a home school in the foreign nation where the student's parent is a religious worker and meet the academic eligibility requirements of §49-4-908(2)(A).

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Dependent child" means a natural or adopted child or stepchild whom the parent, who is a religious worker, claims as a dependent for federal income tax purposes; provided, however, that such child is under twenty-one (21) years of age, and resides in another nation only while the parent is actively engaged in full-time religious work; and

(2) "Religious worker" means a person sent to another country by a church, religious denomination or other religious organization to spread its faith or to do social or medical work.

(c) This section shall only apply to dependent children of religious workers who are engaged in full-time religious work in another nation for more than one (1) year and who were Tennessee residents before leaving the United States to do religious work and intend to return to Tennessee upon completion of their assignment as a religious worker.

SECTION 2. A student may apply for the retroactive award of a Tennessee HOPE scholarship for any semester of the 2005-2006 academic year in which the student would have qualified for a scholarship under this act, had the provisions of this act been in effect during that academic year. TSAC may award the scholarship retroactively, if the student meets all applicable requirements for the scholarship.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply.